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SUBJECT: MINURCAT AND EUFOR STIRRING IN CHAD

REF: A. USEU BRUSSELS 3258  
[1](#)B. SECSTATE 147043

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[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: A new kind of international operation is slowing standing up in Chad as European (EUFOR) and UN (MINURCAT) forces embark on a joint exercise in providing security to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Chad's isolated eastern provinces bordering Sudan. Given the logistical complexity, it is not surprising that the operation will not fully deploy until Feb/March 2008. Humanitarian workers in eastern Chad look forward to the arrival of EUFOR/MINURCAT, but worry about the rules of engagement, and the division of responsibilities between humanitarian and military actors. Airlift capacity is in short supply, and might be an area where the United States could assist the operation. End summary.

EUFOR ARRIVES IN N'DJAMENA  
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[1](#)2. (U) The advance team for the European Forces in Chad and Central African Republic (EUFOR) arrived in Chad in early October. The head of the forces on the ground, French General Jean-Philippe Ganascia, is expected to arrive November 20. In a meeting with Emboffs October 29, Colonel Jacques Zocchetto, head of the EUFOR Advance Team, explained that the first deployment in the zone should commence by December 20 with full deployment expected by Feb/March (EUFOR must be in place before UN-trained gendarmes can take up their duty stations by the refugee camps and IDP locations.) The one year clock of the EUFOR operation will start ticking on full deployment.

TROOP NUMBERS AND LOGISTICS  
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[1](#)3. (SBU) The number of European troops on the ground -- originally forecast at 3,500 -- has increased to 4,300 according to interviews with the Paris-based EUFOR chief, General Nash. Zocchetto stated that over a third of these are for support/logistics. While France was prepared to offer 1,500 soldiers (including rehatting some French soldiers currently serving at Epervier base in Chad), the slow progress in mustering the remainder is a concern.

Contributions from Poland (400), Ireland (350), Sweden (200 for six months only), Austria (160), Romania (120), Belgium (100) have been reported in the press. Zocchetto noted that the Chadians apparently wanted to combine 1,000 Chadian soldiers with EUFOR -- an offer which was highly problematic, particularly as regards maintaining the neutrality of the force.

14. (SBU) Zocchetto explained that the major logistics constraint was lack of airlift (a point he noted had been made in Brussels at a briefing October 10). Antonovs and French Transall can only land in eastern Chad at certain times of the day due to runway conditions and high heat. In addition to the need for an intra-theater airlift capability such as the C-130, helicopters will be needed to transport personnel, equipment, and supplies between basecamps that are not in close proximity to airfields. If support in airlift were to be made available, it would answer EUFOR's greatest need.

#### EUFOR BREAKS NEW GROUND FOR THE EU

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15. (SBU) Zocchetto acknowledged that there were many "firsts" for the EUFOR operation. A cross-border operation with a contingent in northern Central African Republic, EUFOR was the biggest and most expensive European force to date (Euros 100 million, not including the costs accruing to troop-contributing countries for troop deployment). It was also a first time pairing with UN-trained gendarmes on a mission to provide security for refugees and IDPs. Zocchetto commented that diplomats in Brussels had no idea of the scope or complexity of the operation. Getting fuel (trucked in from Cameroon or Nigeria) was a problem. Obtaining cement in a country with no cement production was a problem. Simply providing the 8 - 12 liters per day for the European soldiers

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was a major undertaking. (In fact, rather than transport water, they intend to dig new wells and leave the infrastructure to the local populations).

16. (SBU) While the official language of EUFOR is english, EUFOR has an overwhelmingly French character. Advance Chief Zocchetto told Emboffs that he understood that the success or failure of EUFOR had significant implications for future European involvement in Africa. According to him, the view in France was: "if EUFOR fails, France will be alone in Africa." Along those lines, N'Djamena has hosted a stream of European visitors, from the Austrian Minister of Defense to (more recently) the Irish Foreign Minister. All have come to see first hand the terrain where they will shortly be committing troops. All have come away with a sobering sense of the enormous cost of the operation and the difficulties of operating in a semi-desert environment at the end of the world's longest supply line.

#### MINURCAT PREPARATIONS

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17. (SBU) On November 2, MINURCAT head Oussema Campaore (on loan to DPKO from UNHCR) briefed EmbOffs on preparations for the UN-trained Gendarme presence in eastern Chad. He explained that MINURCAT was not a typical peace-keeping operation; he also acknowledged that the GOC was chafing at what it considered the lack of coordination and consultation. (A Status of Forces agreement was still awaiting signature). Campaore reiterated that MINURCAT cannot deploy until EUFOR is deployed, which gives him about two months for preparation. In the meantime, MINURCAT is setting up its N'Djamena office and awaiting the arrival of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Chad (expected by the end of 2007). Until the Special Envoy's arrival, UN Humanitarian Coordinator Kingsley Amaning is the senior UN representative in Chad.

18. (SBU) Campaore outlined some of the challenges ahead for MINURCAT. EUFOR will provide the force protection and transportation for the civilian mission, but EUFOR and MINURCAT have separate lines of command/control, and therefore close communication/coordination will be needed. Three hundred UN trainers will be providing two months training to some 800 Chadian Gendarmes before the Chadians are deployed to the east. The training will be in N'Djamena at a location to be decided (comment: the Chadian Gendarmes and Police Academies are fiercely contesting who will host the training; both are rudimentary in nature. End comment). The Chadian government will present gendarme candidates to MINURCAT which will test them and make the final choice. Campaore noted that ensuring ethnic diversity would be important.

#### HUMANITARIANS RAISE CONCERNS

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19. (SBU) On November 7, Campaore and EUFOR Lieutenant Colonel Laurent Paccaud briefed members of the humanitarian community (UN and Non-Government Organizations) and donors on MINURCAT/EUFOR progress. The humanitarian community welcomed the arrival of MINURCAT/EUFOR: security continues to be a problem in the east, with vehicle theft the number one concern. Random violence on the major routes between refugee/IDP camps and humanitarian bases is also a problem. Nonetheless, many humanitarians stressed the need to have a clear distinction between their mandate and the work of the EUFOR civilian affairs officers (who may, according to French press reports, have a large role to play in reconstruction of IDP villages) and the Chadian gendarmes. Paccaud responded that the UN-trained gendarmes would be wearing Chadian uniforms with a small patch signifying their association with the UN. Paccaud also expected the gendarmes to be driving white land cruisers (the car of choice for UN and NGO workers) with a mark on the license plate. The Oxfam representative pointed out that the average Chadian did not have positive associations with the military and it would be important -- for both the military and the humanitarian workers -- for them to distinguish themselves as much as possible from the outset. She suggested painting the cars a

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different color so that the military force would be easily recognizable. The gendarmes will be armed with pistols, which prompted the humanitarians to express doubts about the ability of the gendarmes to have an impact on security.

10. (SBU) Paccaud also described EUFOR's 100 million Euro "trust fund." The fund will include 60 million for "infrastructure development" (20 million for N'Djamena, 20 million in Abeche, 20 million for eastern Chad); the remaining 40 million is for "operational expenses" (i.e. fuel, personnel). Concerning transportation of supplies and equipment, Paccaud acknowledged that they had not decided on the best option. Whether trucking through Nigeria, Cameroon or Libya, each route presented unique challenges.

#### COMMENT

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11. (SBU) This complex operation is moving slowly; the players are grappling with immense logistical challenges and with the need to establish close coordination between the two forces and the GOC. MINURCAT/EUFOR will also need to compensate for a rocky start in which the GOC felt left out of the loop (not to mention the anti-French fall-out from the Arche de Zoe affair). EUFOR members are acutely aware of the need to keep the presence from projecting an overweening French aspect; nonetheless, the French military base in N'Djamena has been the nerve center of the operation. As far as the UN portion, given the challenges of establishing a training center and identifying recruits, a "forced march" will be needed to deliver the first tranche of trained and equipped Chadian gendarmes by the March EUFOR deployment.

¶12. (SBU) From the first proposals of the UN Secretary General to place a "multidimensional force" in eastern Chad, the United States has been supportive in principle. If successful, the "security umbrella" provided by this force in eastern Chad will enable the GOC to begin to re-establish its security presence; it will allow humanitarian actors to fulfill their mandates; it will create conditions for IDP returns, and it will allow traditional systems of justice a breathing space in which to work towards reconciliation in the communities which have suffered the trauma of inter-ethnic conflict. We believe it is in the USG interest to be supportive and recommend that Washington consider provision of airlift (C-130's or helicopters) for even a short period.

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